

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

On page 1, above line 1, please insert the following paragraph:

--CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

Applicants claim priority under 35 U.S.C. §119 of German Application No. 102 25 072.3 filed on June 5, 2002. Applicants also claim priority under 35 U.S.C. §365 of PCT/EP03/04979 filed on MAY 13, 2003. The international application under PCT article 21(2) was not published in English.--

On page 2 of the Specification, please insert the following paragraphs following line 3:

-- DE 44 31 396 A1 discloses a tufting machine, a tufted fabric as well as a method for producing the fabric. The machine comprises a single or several needle bars and loop forming fingers by way of which loop pile lines are formed on the top of a woven support fabric, and pile tuft lines are formed on the reverse of The woven support fabric, in that during loop formation the needles are laterally displaced. Various methods are described to operate this machine in conjunction with yarn-supply pattern control devices, pattern-controlled needle bar positioning mechanisms and a controllable fabric supply, so as to produce a multitude of novel fabrics that feature an appearance which up to now could only be achieved on weaving looms or knitting frames. The fabrics produced in this way are The to have certain advantages, in particular lower loop density, better coverage of the woven support fabric, less resistance during sliding movement, improved abrasion resistance and improved fold-formation characteristics. Fig. 10B of DE 44 31 396 A1 shows a

sample in which on certain needles at certain loops the yarn quantity supplied is inadequate so that said needles form lower pile tuft loops at the underside of the woven support fabric, wherein said lower pile tuft loops are pulled out of the support fabric when the needles are lifted. Consequently, certain loops are not attached in the support fabric. The fabric tufted in this way is then processed by a cutting machine which cuts the loose yarn off.

--DE 41 32 024 A1 discloses a floor covering for a passenger motor vehicle, which floor covering has been produced with a tufting machine. In this floor covering, a larger quantity of pile yarn is needled-in in those regions which are subjected to substantial mechanical loads when compared to the quantity of pile yarn needled-in in the regions subjected to less mechanical load. To this effect, the tufting machine used comprises individually controllable needles. The number of needles activated during an advance cycle is varied according to the desired yarn density.

--WO 02/20307 A1 discloses various embodiments of an acoustically effective floor covering for the interior of transport means. On the side facing the passenger compartment, this floor covering comprises a non-textile or textile surface, in particular a tufted carpet, wherein this surface is acoustically coupled to a floor covering underlay made from a nonwoven fibre fabric and/or foamed plastic, with such coupling taking place by way of at least one micro-perforated foil. The textile or non-textile surface of the floor covering is designed so as to be sound-penetrable. In relation to materials designs with an originally closed surface, WO 02/20307 A1 proposes to provide the desired sound penetrability by means of micro-perforation, among other ways with the use of needle rollers.--

On page 2 of the Specification, please replace the third full paragraph with the following:

--The floor covering according to the invention is essentially characterised by a tufted velour carpet layer ~~which has comprising~~ a tuft carrier ~~carrying~~which carries pile knots and has longitudinal rows of tufts, comprising zigzagged back-stitches, on the underside thereof, wherein the tuft carrier comprises a plurality of perforations defining gaps between the pile knots, said perforations having been produced by tufting needles without pile yarn so that between longitudinal rows of tufts, comprising zigzagged back-stitches, longitudinal perforation rows are formed that have been made by tufting needles without pile yarn, wherein for binding the pile knots to the underside of the tuft carrier an adhesive material has been applied, which adhesive material essentially leaves free the perforations that have been formed by the tufting needles without pile yarn.--

On page 2 of the Specification, please replace the fourth full paragraph with the following:

~~--Accordingly, t~~The method according to the invention is essentially characterised in that, in order to produce a tufted velour carpet layer, a plurality of pile yarn is introduced into a tuft carrier according to a racking technique, by means of a plurality of tufting needles held in a needle holder, in such a way as to create longitudinal rows of tufts comprising zigzagged back-stitches, on the underside of the tuft carrier, a plurality of perforations defining gaps between the pile knots being produced in the tuft carrier by means of tufting needles without pile yarn.--